551 The device is recited on numerous occasions. After a birth, the
576 griot proclaim it in the course of the name-giving ceremony, address-
778 ing themselves to the father, then to the newborn child /79/ who thus
564 receives it for the first time. At a marriage the barama of the two partners are alternatly recited. In everyday life, the recitation is carried on most frequently during religious ceremonies or feasts. In the hunt or at war, it has the effect of helping the participants and increasing their courage (1). In a meeting it is used to greet people

[727] 1. If the griot recites it to a war chief and the town under attack is taken, he receives part of the loot.

bearing the same name, and if one of the assistants is to be particularly honored, the first words of his device are recited.

551 In case of illness, the ally (senãnku) (2) comes to the patient's
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2. See p. 119.

side and recites his barama to encourage him and help him get well. If he is dying, the recitation, which is then the equivalent of a prayer, may help his soul return. After death, the ally, the griot, and the [764] blacksmiths come near the corpse to recite his barama in order to honor him.

55/ The devices pertaining to the various crafts are used when address-
576 ing the artisan with whom one has business. Thus the blacksmith to
539 whom one brings work is greeted first by his name to which is then added:

"ini fara ani goni, you are with stone and fire."

A person crossing a field will say to the farmer bent over the earth: "i ni tye i ba ka kusebe daba, greeting to him who handles the hoe well," or simply: "i ni tye daba la, greeting to him who is with the hoe." To the shoemaker one would say: "bana ani ba golo, (you are) with the acacia (3) and the goat leather."

[386] 3. This refers to the bana or boina (Acacia arabica) used by the shoemaker to make a black dye.

Death at War

•727 When a warrior returns home in good health after a battle, the sacrificer or the village chief orders the performance of the ni yere klo, "game of the vibration of the soul," to celebrate his return. Men and women gather in the village square to sing: "The soul is come, the light of the soul is come, the drum of the soul will be played for it" (1). Next they form a circle and turning first in one direction and then

1. Ni nana, ni yelengu nana, ni dunu na fo o la.

in the other, throw a little water on the head of the individual concerned, thus "refreshing his soul."

766 When a man dies at war, the rituals whose object he becomes bring into play the nyama boli of the Komo, the altar dedicated to the conservation of the souls of those who die a vilent death.

In former times the stone which had mortally hit a warrior was carefully kept. The corpse was washed /200/ on cowries and on stones used for slings because its nyama, which impregnated them, made them more efficient in killing. The body was also transported to the exit of the village where each villager offered cowrie shells while he pronounced the name of the victim. Then it was swung three times in the direction of the village, first feet forward and next head forward. After all the villagers had retired to their homes, the Koi was brought out. The stone that had killed the man was struck to call forth his soul; then it was rubbed on the nyama boli to make the soul penetrate the altar. A dance was held with the altar, and the body [824] was buried and covered with fresh branches of ngamyã (2). The grave was watered to "refresh the dead man" while the chief

2. Celtis integrifolia.

was watered to "refresh the dead man" while the chief of the Komo made sacrifices over the nyama and the nimara boli.

Death Away from Home

766 167 The necessity of performing the rituals as well as their detailed quality are such that a Bambara is always advised against expatriation.

2: Monteil--17 G-5 (1902-1923) 1924 FA8 Bambara FA8
Malinke FA27

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and Appellations among the Malinké...] in the Bulletin du Comité des études historiques et scientifiques de l'A.O.F. 1918, nos. 3 and 4.

inhabited by independent Bambara.

This clan or, as one is tempted to say, this empire of Kelta was formed in the thirteenth century after wars between Soumangourou Kanté and Soun Dyata Kelta and with the aid of various elements (3), including a group of Mandinké which

3. In the same way we shall see Biton forming furu-ba-dyon' from the ton-dyon', slaves captured from the chief of Dina, and from captives acquired elsewhere. In the same connection, see in the Tarikh el Fettach the curious story of the 24 slave tribes of the Songhaï clan which came from the Mandé clan.

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[16] had been organized earlier by (1) a chief named Gourmandana.

1. Within the clan, the slaves, who always constitute the power of a clan, are divided into groups named in accordance with a particular aspect of organization. The Boula seem to have enjoyed a degree of consideration comparable to that attained by the Ton-dyon' at Ségou. Judging by the meaning of the word Bula, it would seem that they were "freedmen," and this is the meaning given by native traditionists. On the subject of the Boula, see the afore-mentioned work by Humblot. Boula women have the given name of Damba and they are addressed as Sakiliba, while the men are called Soussoro. This practice of giving a common name to a whole

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583 Most often, however, the heirs either marry the widows
589 or send them home, or the women leave of their own volition.
768 An heir who marries a widow of the deceased must take
[587] her back to her family, obtain their consent, and pay them a new bride price, required because a new usufruct is involved. The chronicle of Ségou shows us how this custom operates. Upon the death of Dina Wara, his son escorted to Ségou his father's widow, Biton's sister, whom he wanted to marry. He made sumptuous gifts in order to obtain consent.

In the case of a widow who is sent home or who leaves of her own accord, responsibility for the bride price already paid rests with the party who broke the contract, i.e., with the person who sent the widow away or, if she left of her own accord, with her family. The question of responsibility for the bride price is an important one, since usually neither party has either the means or the desire to make it up. As a result, every effort is made to evade payment, and it is common practice to resort to the most shameless bargaining of the woman involved. A husband is sought who will agree to pay the bride price asked by the one having rights over her, but most often, partial payment will be made when the woman is returned, the creditor's impatience is calmed by gifts, and the balance of the bride price remains wholly or partly unpaid [190] at the time of the debtor's death. This obviously results in insolvable complications during and after the marriage (1).

1. Concerning the lot of widows, see the discussions about the widows of Biton and Ngolo in the chronicle of Ségou.

567 Slaves. Enslavement comes about in many ways, but the
727 three principal ones are force, birth, and the result of obligations.

Force has perhaps been the primary cause of enslavement. A person who surrenders is the chattel of the conqueror, but the treatment given him varies in accordance with his previous situation. Was he a man of position? If he is violent, he is killed or sold; if it is thought that his relatives will pay a high ransom, he is kept. If he is clever enough to arouse sympathy, he often is

567 well treated; if his captivity continues for a long time, he may
727 even found a family and live like a free man on parole, required only to remain where he is. Time takes care of many things. Under the same circumstances, a woman of quality usually becomes the wife of the conqueror.

People belonging to a caste escape slavery by entering the service of the conqueror to perform their customary trades.

It is only humble people -- the majority -- whose lot is often terrible; dragged far away, sold and resold, they often fall into the hands of bad masters.

567 Theoretically, a female slave's children are always slaves. A child born in slavery belongs to the mother's master and shares her fate. If she is the master's concubine, the child is born free and thereby frees the mother.

A contract slave is not always master of his own fate. Since the fa has absolute authority over his people, it is he who makes the contract which binds them.

[681] A free individual may fall into slavery as a result of his crimes or misdemeanors (2); it is in this way that an incorrigible

2. Nzan Fato became a slave for stealing a beehive (p. 49 above).

thief becomes the slave of the chief to whom he is sent for punishment.

Many poor people, attracted by the favored lot of the [191] wolo-so in large communities, go into voluntary slavery in hope of a comparable position. All the Sudanese empires had these voluntary slaves, who came in great numbers from all directions.

Where there are many slaves, they form what is called dyon'-kuru or dyon'-futu, depending on the place, that is, "an assembly of slaves," and their leader, who represents them with the master, is an important personage by virtue of their strength. When the community to which these slaves belong is an ancient one, they are divided into groups, each of which is named for the fa under whose authority it was organized. In theory, the leader of each group is its oldest member, and the leader of the

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terms nyana and boli are used interchangeably. This is natural enough since the latter is merely the symbol of the former.

Each nyana has a boli which in form and substance is peculiar to it. Anything may be used to make boli: horn or hair of the hare, hind, or cattle; nails or claws; animal venom or excretions. It is not unusual to find parts of a human body put to use. As the chronicle tells, the war drums of the ton-dyon' were elevated to the rank of boli and were then adorned with the craniums and jaws of human beings sacrificed to them. Often the ball tied to the end of a piece of rope or leather and used to beat the tabala [Tr., big drum] is a human hand which has been severed and wrapped in a leather cover.

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Certain of the boli, particularly those of the Komo and the Kono, are said to be made of a child's torso; those of the Tyi-wara and Nama are made of wood, and those of the Duga of horn.

All sorts of shapes are employed: men, animals, doll-like figures, balls, small crowns, etc. The principal boli, called boli-de-n-fa, is accompanied by subsidiary ones called boli-de.

The boli is also given sex: one is male, another female; and it is said that there is a kind of mystical copulation [254] from which at the time of initiation are born the spiritual sons of the nyana.

Among boli should be noted those made of forked sticks, such as the n-Golo and the Tyi-wara, both patrons of brotherhoods of young men (1).

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1. If one makes certain comparisons, the forked stick seems to deserve special attention. Among the Khassonké, for instance, the soli-ma always build their seclusion hut (bire) with a forked post in the center. This post, called biri-makho (master of the hut), is a tree trunk chosen

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567 The ton'-dyon' of the furu-ba is a kind of person of caste: he cannot cease to be ton'-dyon', and his children will live and die as ton'-dyon'. He is subject to the despotic authority of the fama. For a free man, it is certainly a fall to become a ton'-dyon', but for a slave, on the contrary, it is an improvement in status. Among the ton'-dyon' there are all sorts of people; this was the case in the beginning and has continued to be so as time passed. Although slaves obtained from armed forays were an [727] important element in the totality of the ton'-dyon', there were undoubtedly many men, free but poor, who were glad to join the ton'-dyon' so as to protect themselves from the depredations of these hardly commendable persons and also to gain the right of using the same procedures themselves.

Among the ton'-dyon', therefore, there are people of all races and all conditions; indeed, this is so true that all the dyamu are mingled under this common label.

Within the furu-ba, the ton'-dyon' formed a category apart and always retained the prerogatives which in native society accompany seniority. The ton'-dyon' were the "elders." Prisoners reduced to slavery formed the furu-ba-dyon', properly speaking, and they were grouped in series, each taking its origin from the fama who organized it. There they followed the usual path. Barring favorable circumstances which might allow them to escape the wretchedness of the early days of captivity, they started out as members of the gang of slaves-of-all-work, often considered as a kind of medium of exchange and for that reason called san'-dyon'-u (slaves of exchange). Once they were adopted by a community, a woman acquired the status [301] of wolo-so when she bore a child, while a man might achieve comparable status by gaining the confidence of his masters.

The wolo-so became a dyongoron when he was in a position to send his children to work in his place and to pay an annual fee.

Once he reached the status of wolo-so, the slave became, in actual fact, a person of caste. In principle, he could not be sold, he had the right of ownership, and he could leave property to his children. Indeed, he was often better off than a man who was free but poor.

614 Within the clan, property is also held in common and
575 administered by the fama who distributes it among the dyon'-
[421] kuntigi. The latter, in turn, make a further distribution as it is needed.

In the fla-n-ton' the important thing was provisions, material well-being. The same thing is true in the clan. The ton'-dyon' are interested in the profit to be derived from the association, and their feeling for the state is embodied in a very prosaic word, to-da, literally, "the pot of mush." Indeed, this is the principal item on the menue of any fraternal feast of the fla-n-ton'.

614 The property of the clan, as of the fla-n-ton', is theo-
421 retically jointly held by all the members, but since there is a large amount of it, some sort of sharing is necessary, first to consume it and then to reward zeal and fidelity and to encourage emulation and devotion. As a result, the basic egalitarianism is altered. From the clan's beginning it was conceded that a substantial part of the wealth should go to those [308] who had done most to acquire it. Thus, the leader of an expedition had a prior right because of his "luck," and he and his men further received the wherewithal "to repair the rents in their shirts," i.e., to indemnify them for damages suffered during the expedition.

e [727] Each warrior kept his own loot, except for unusually valuable things which went to the clan and therefore to the fama who represented it. The part of the loot not taken ~~by individuals~~ was distributed by the fama after abstracting the best and largest part of it for himself.

Strictly speaking, no one actually owned any of this wealth, since all of them, even the fama, merely held it on very precarious terms. Through the caprice of the clan, anyone could [562] have everything taken away, and this applied to persons as well as to things, because the wives and children of the ton'-dyon' were, like himself, the "chattels" of the clan.

The passage of time softened the outward form of these principles; barring abuse or notorious misconduct, each individual had indefinite use of what was allotted to him and handed it on to his descendants. This usufruct, incidentally, was broader than that of our law. In addition, Mamari arrogated to himself a kind of eminent right: he appointed himself -- through usurpation facilitated by his power -- the dispenser of offices and wealth

614 726 surrounded by ton'-dyon'. Behind the disi there was a special reserve composed only of ton'-dyon'; this was the ton'-koro-bolo.

614 701 The fama himself designated the leader (keli-tigi) of all the expeditions of war. This might be one of the dyon'-kuntigi or some member of the community of the fama; sometimes the fama himself might take command.

The personal protection of the fama was the duty of the corps of sofa. In principle, considering the etymology of the name, the sofa were supposed to take care of the horses; this does not mean that they were necessarily horsemen or even grooms. The youngest served as pages and sometimes as grooms; the older ones were confidential aides to whom the fama entrusted missions. The sofa constituted one part -- and by no means the least important -- of what might be called the household of the fama: an assemblage of persons employed for various duties under the immediate authority of the fama.

● [727] They were recruited from young prisoners taken in raids and other operations of war.

When the fama led an expedition which was engaged for some time or when he took part in some important affair, he liked to arrange and to preside over the soli of the boys of the conquered people and to have one or more of his many children take part. [312] This was a means of assuring himself of the devotion, generally regarded as unfailing, of these soli-ma whose "birth" into man's estate he had honored and who, by virtue of the ceremony itself, were thus linked to some of his own children. Mostly these young men would then swell the ranks of the sofa.

This army, which might be said to be a regular army, theoretically received everything it needed from the fama: mounts, equipment, weapons, ammunition, etc. This justified the very considerable share of booty kept by the fama himself; he was thus repaid for what he had furnished, was provided with resources needed to replace what had been destroyed, and finally, was able to add to the store of equipment needed to make war. There was also the special need to increase the clan's treasury with a view to all possible eventualities.

The army was augmented by allied or volunteer contingents. The allies had a solemn agreement with the clan, based on a

614 religious and reciprocal oath. Their contribution entitled them
701 to a share of the booty. Volunteers, who enlisted for an engagement or a whole campaign, came in under conditions settled in advance.

The fama furnished the allies, just as he did the volunteers, with whatever they needed and deducted the amount from their share of the loot. Sometimes a third party, not involved in the expedition, provided mounts, equipment, and weapons for the enterprise in exchange for a prearranged reward.

In short, armed pillage was a business directed by the fama, who could admit interested participants if he so desired. If the operation were successful, the clan gained predominance over
● [727] the conquered regions, which the fama then exploited as he saw fit. The booty was the first result of the enterprise, and it served both to pay the expenses incurred in the affair and to swell the treasury of the clan.

This explains why the clan's army, for a consideration, hired itself out to anyone who asked for support, as an ally, as a mercenary force, or in any other capacity. The army might simply intervene in a quarrel of its own accord when there seemed to be profit to be gained (1). [313]

1. See below how the fama of Ségou lent his support to a marabout of Sous. The Bambara also intervened on numerous occasions in the internal quarrels of Khasso, Boundou, Fouta, etc. Their role as mercenaries is clearly shown in the Tarikh es Soudan.

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701 The ton'-dyon' were distinguished by a special hair ar-
569 rangement. Their heads were completely shaved except for three
[302] tufts of hair which formed two braids on the crown of the head and one at the nape of the neck.

The slaves of the household of the fama could be recognized by their well-known tattoo (1) which consisted of three

[304]

1. In general, it is risky to depend

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565 3. the free men;

4. people of caste, such as blacksmiths, etc. (see below);

5. slaves.

567 e. Slavery. -- A man became a slave in three ways: by violence, by obligation, or by birth.

567 1. By violence. If a war captive is important, he may be killed or he may be held for ransom and treated with consideration.
727 A Fama captured in war could become an army chief or dignitary in
554 the country of his captor and could found a family there. In no case could he be reduced to captivity on his own territory.

[60] If the vanquished is a man of caste, he is spared captivity and generally enters the service of the conquering Fama;
[608] if he is a sènanku of the victor, the latter gets rid of him by freeing him. Finally, if the captive has the same name as the victorious
[551] Fama, he is freed, because he is recognized as being a relative of the Fama.

When the captive is a free man of humble origin, he is sold by the Fama, unless the Fama gives him to his warriors.

567 2. By obligation. A free individual became a slave in
681 punishment for his crimes or misdemeanors; he was then sold for the
426 profit of the Fama. A fa could sell one of his children to meet his
858 debts, but he subsequently had to try to buy him back once he was freed of his obligations.

567 3. By birth. A woman slave bears only slaves. The slave born in the house is called a wolo-so. If a woman slave is got with child by a free man, she becomes free, as does her child. But if the mother is repudiated, she reverts to slavery, while the child remains free.

567 As the number of slaves grew, their organization became
644 complicated and hierarchic. The slaves under the Fama of Sègou were divided into series, each having as chief the eldest of the slaves. The eldest of these chiefs became chief of the dyon-kuru or dyon-futu (ensemble of slaves). Monteil shows the important role this slave chief has played in the history of Ségou. In fact, he was the spokesman for all the grievances of the slaves and often became the Fama's adviser. At the death of the Fama, the slave chief confirmed the power of his successor by assuring him or refusing him, the submission of all the slaves.

463 554 [326] The numu: blacksmiths, whose wives are generally potters. The smiths are the masters of fire, those who cook the sacred earth in order to extract the minerals or to fix the form of pottery.

The loro: coppersmiths.

The garanka: leatherworkers.

The kule: woodworkers, and sometimes saddlemakers.

The donso: hunters, who form powerful and feared associations.

The somono, or fishermen, who have a status a little less restricted than that of the artisans mentioned above.

The dyeli or griot, domestic factotums of a kind, who, although the most disdained of all these, are nevertheless the family archivists.

[563] One may add two Peul shepherd tribes, identified by Manson: the Dyanna and the Bouguena (1).

1. See Monteil, Les Bambara du Ségou et du Kaarta [The Bambara of Ségou and Kaarta].

463 564 All of these artisans are endogamous and fixed in caste, father to son. However, the fact that a man belongs to a caste does not obligate him to exercise the caste trade.

326 463 608 The most powerful guild is incontestably that of the blacksmiths. From their ranks are recruited all the priests, the Fama's interpreters, the well-diggers, the grave-diggers, the executioners, the circumcisers, etc. They are the sénanku of all the families and are in charge of all the purification rites.

554 The griot are equally feared, because of the power of their words and because they spread afar the renown of the chiefs.

564 The free man who marries a woman of caste marries beneath himself, and his children are looked down on.

[326] The purest blacksmith families are those of the Fané Balo; the purest griot those of the Koniaté. People of caste always remain [527] at liberty; when they are captured during a war, they make themselves known and keep their status.

463 326 [64] These different guilds are sufficient to maintain in the Bambara country a certain industry of a distinctly artisan and non-specialized type. Thus, the smiths work iron, copper, and wood to